



Regional Workshop on ECCE UNESCO Tashkent Declaration 2022: Sharing Progress & the Roadmap for Success

With the participation of countries from Eastern and South Africa including Seychelles



STC Conference Room, Victoria Mahe, Seychelles



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Minister for Education Launches Regional Workshop on ECCE

Seychelles' Minister for Education, Dr. Justin Valentin officially launched the regional workshop on transforming Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) in Africa at the Savoy Resort and Spa on June 5.

Senior Government Officials and ECCE experts from the 22 countries are evaluating progress and the Way Forward for Africa on the Tashkent Declaration and Commitments to Action for Transforming ECCE for Countries of the Southern African and Eastern African Community.

In his keynote address, Minister Valentin noted that, "while much has been achieved and considerable progress recorded in the field of ECCE, with key indicators of child development outcomes on the rise across the world, many young children in some countries are still at risk of poor or inadequate development outcomes".

These he says may have been exacerbated by or are directly impacted by both national and global challenges such as poverty and Socio-economic deprivations, limited access to education, political instability due to conflicts and crises, health pandemics and climate change.

These are "considerable threats to the wellbeing of young children as they limit ECCE provisions and the quality of the nurturing care and fundamental early learning causing grave disparities and inequalities in their development.

As a result, the countries affected lag behind in their progress and find it extremely difficult to meet their commitments due to these destabilising factors" he commented.

As a UNESCO Category 2 Institute for ECCE, we are committed to sharing the knowledge, expertise and experience gained and good practices in advancing the ECCE agenda nationally with other countries in the region and beyond. We firmly believe that a lot can be achieved in establishing cooperation and extending networking partnerships, through knowledge and skills transfer on best practice pillars and technical assistance and support, with a view to strengthening the holistic, comprehensive and quality ECCE services we provide to young children.



It is said that early childhood care and education remains one of the strongest investments we can make to the long-term success of our children and the long-term economic strength of our country.

This statement is true for every one of us gathered here today.

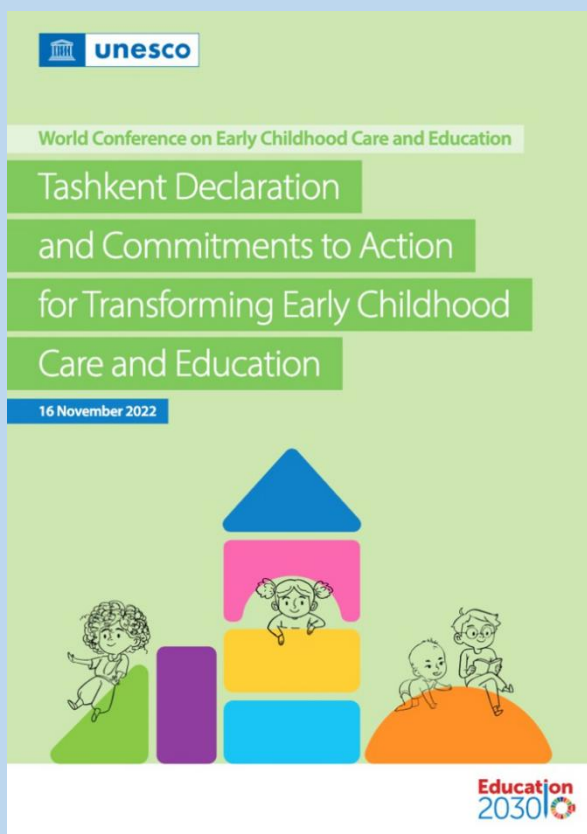
Dr. Justin Valentin – Minister for Education

IECD CEO – Welcoming Delegates to Seychelles

Speaking during the opening ceremony, The Chief Executive Officer of IECD, Mrs. Shirley Choppy told delegates that Seychelles may be small, with challenges of our own, to sustain our resilient and comprehensive ECCE system in search of pursuit of quality ECCE provision. However, we are determined to share our best practices, knowledge and experiences we have amassed during our transformational journey with you, our dear counterparts on the continent, and also take the opportunity to learn from your experiences. This Regional Workshop is a testament to our commitment to transcending borders, not just within our region, but globally, and I am confident that it will be a catalyst for meaningful change in the early childhood development landscape.

I am happy to note that the African Union has designated 2024 as the Year of Education for Africa, in an effort to galvanize and accelerate the achievement of SDG 4. The theme aligns perfectly with our countries, regions, and global shared vision and strategic priorities for achieving SDG 4.2 for ECCE by 2030. As we embark on this journey, I would like to emphasize the vital role that education plays in Africa's development and poverty reduction.

It is through education that we can empower our children, communities, and continent, ultimately creating a brighter future for all. By prioritizing early childhood development, we are investing in the foundation of our collective prosperity, and as a Category 2 Centre, we are committed to working together with you towards this vision. Let us celebrate the power of collaboration and knowledge sharing in achieving our goals for a brighter future for our children on our continent.



The Declaration in Summary

The Tashkent Declaration on Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) is a significant document that outlines a global commitment to transforming ECCE. It was adopted in November 2022 at the UNESCO World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education.

The declaration highlights the importance of ECCE as a foundation for lifelong learning, well-being, and sustainable development. It recognizes that disparities in ECCE access and quality can have lasting negative effects, and calls for urgent action to ensure inclusive and quality ECCE for all children.

The Tashkent Declaration sets out guiding principles and strategies for achieving this goal. These include:

- * Ensuring equitable access to quality ECCE for all children, regardless of background or circumstance.
- * Investing in well-trained and qualified ECCE personnel.
- * Fostering innovation and using technology to improve ECCE delivery.
- * Strengthening governance, financing, and monitoring of ECCE programs.

It is a call to action for governments, international organizations, NGOs, and all stakeholders to work together to transform ECCE and reach the goal of Sustainable Development Goal 4.2: ensuring all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care, and pre-primary education by 2030.

Child Care Benefit Scheme Goes Digital

The department of Information and Communication Technology (DICT) has launched the Child Care Benefit Information System Seychelles (CCBISS). This is an online platform which makes the administration of the existing Child Care Benefit Scheme much easier and efficient for all concerned.

It centrally administers the process of child registration, and offers timely updates and confirmation on registrations and payments. Parents, guardians, and childcare service providers who use the system can access and fill in online, crucial documents related to the existing Child Care Benefit Scheme, such as Parental Confirmation Forms, Transfer Forms for newly registered childcare providers. In addition, it produces detailed reports for informed decision-making.

In launching the platform, the Principal Secretary for DICT, Mr. Benjamin Choppy noted that out of the 2,400 parents making use of this scheme, 1,480 or 62% have already registered on the CCBISS platform. "This is very encouraging indeed and the following month, it will also be the first time that payments under the scheme will be administered by the platform. It is definitely something that all involved, including the IECD and the Ministry of Finance will be monitoring very closely to ensure that everything works as intended" he commented.

CCBIS is also a locally developed product which the DICT contracted SPACE95, a local IT company, to build. Its implementation is also aligned with the call in the Tashkent Declaration relating to increased use of ICT in the ECCE space.



The 2 Cs in the acronym represents the terms 'Child Care'. In the logo the big C is embracing the small c which depicts the nurturing care of a care giver to a child. The fusion of colours blue and red in the logo signifies the colour brand of the UNESCO and the IECD (Seychelles). The yellow shining spark symbolizes a child at the

centre of all our actions and efforts to bring about quality ECCE provisions and services. The colorful line running below the acronym - green, blue, lilac, yellow and red – embodies our National Colours as well as all the colours in the IECD emblem.



Ms. Laurette Lebon, Project Coordinator for the Logo of the Child Care Benefit Information System Seychelles explaining the details of the logo.

Opening ceremony in pictures



Delegates Expectations



Aux Comores on a introduit la petite enfance

très récemment, partir de 2012. Donc nous avons beaucoup d'attentes suite à cet atelier pour qu'on puisse avancer et mettre en place des institutions nécessaires qui vont être capables de gérer la petite enfance dans tous les niveaux.

Parce c'est aux Comores actuellement c'est comme un nouveau un nouveau parce que la petite enfance était dans les écoles privés. Maintenant, on intègre ces classes dans les écoles publiques dans les primaires. Donc on a besoin à partir de cet atelier que l'UNESCO en appui avec la catégorie deux des Seychelles puissent nous accompagner pour qu'on puisse avancer vers les travaux qu'on a commencé, donc je crois que ça peut nous aider à aller de l'avant pour le développement intégral de la petite enfance aux Comores.

Soidik Halim Hafssoitie - Comores



Since we went to Tashkent in 2022, we had those declaration statements, that we had to take home so that we at least improve early childhood in our country. It is true that there is a lot that has been done. So, what I'm expecting here is that at least with the other delegates from other countries,

we share our experiences. Building onto what we had in Tashkent. And so I'm looking forward to learning from other countries and I'm expecting myself to be having something to share with those from other countries about what we are doing in the area of early childhood in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

Dr. Dudu Hlophe- Kingdom of Eswatini



Our expectation as the Malawi delegation is to learn lessons from Seychelles, and also the other delegates that have come from other countries, especially, touching on the declarations that were made from the Tashkent so from this, we are hoping to Implement some of the lessons that we're

going to learn. But for sure, we are also exchanging notes with our colleagues so this is just the beginning of the conversation and beyond this Workshop, we will continue to have conversations with our colleagues from the different countries so that as we proceed implementing some of the issues or the lesson that we have learnt, we can move at the same pace with our colleagues.

Nertha Semphere-Mgala - Malawi



Day 2 Group photo

"We will only be able to move forward and record significant progress on the continent, if we support each other and work together, in areas where we have most strength and where technical assistance is needed to forge strong bonds of cooperation, build partnerships and support structures to bring about meaningful change in the years to come".

Shirley Choppy - CEO- Seychelles Institute of Early Childhood Care

Tashkent Declaration: The Seychelles' Response

Tashkent Declaration (i): Ensure further improvement and implementation of policy and legal frameworks to guarantee the right of every child to inclusive quality care and preprimary education, with special reference to the most disadvantaged children.

1. Education Amended 2017 makes provision for compulsory education for primary 1 to secondary level 5 (early childhood age 6 to 7 yrs)
2. Early Childhood Development (ECD) Act (2022) developed makes provision for non-compulsory education (birth to 5 yrs)
3. The Seychelles Framework for Early Childhood care and Education (version 2.0)
4. ECD National Standards for Childminding Regulations (2016)
5. Draft National Standards for Centre-Based Child Care Regulations
6. Draft Suitability Check Regulations and Regulations for standards in Care Homes



Tashkent Declaration (ii): Strengthen ECCE Systems including the recruitment, qualifications and working conditions of all ECCE personnel and improve regulatory and quality assurance framework striving towards policies and interventions on equal qualifications, certifications, wages status between ECCE and at least primary school teachers. Increase access to evidenced based parenting support programmes for all parents and caregivers

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|--|---|---|
| 1.1. Pre-Registration and sensitization training programme for home-based childcare service providers | 2. Professional development sessions for home-based childcare service providers | 3. Certificate in Child Care and Development introduced in 2021 |
| 4. Certificate in Education for Teacher Assistants (4 – 7 years) | Diploma in Education-Early Childhood (4 – 7 years) + Blended Learning Mode for Inservice Teachers | 5. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Approach |
| 6. Continuous professional training in RIF (Risk Indicator and Assessment Framework) Standards in Home | | |

Tashkent Declaration (i) Cont. Increase ECCE provision, prioritizing inclusion and gender equality and adaptive support



- 1.1. Regulatory functions for registration and regulation of home-based childcare services
2. New and existing Child Care Facilities in the community
3. Establish Policy for expanding Child Care provision in large public and private organisations, institutions and establishments

Tashkent Declaration (ii): Strengthen ECCE Systems including the recruitment, qualifications and working conditions of all ECCE personnel and improve regulatory and quality assurance framework striving towards policies and interventions on equal qualifications, certifications, wages status between ECCE and at least primary school teachers. **Increase access to evidenced based parenting support programmes for all parents and caregivers**

1. Gadget and screen use amongst children in centre-based services (2022 health sector)
2. Sensitisation of parents on various technological controls for children aged 3 to 7 yrs (old/social affairs)
3. Policy dialogue on Welfare of teenage mothers (social affairs)
4. Sensitisation of parents on early stimulation and learning sessions for parents in both registered and unregistered childcare settings. (IECD)
5. Stay and Play to empower teenage parents (Youth Sport and Family)



Tashkent Declaration (iii): Ensure quality Learning for all children, including foundational literacy, numeracy and social –emotional skills, to facilitate their development and transition to formal primary education with attention to mother tongue language of instruction.

Early Learning and Development

1. The Early Learning Framework (SELF) (2011)
2. Development of an Early Learning programme and resources implemented (in mother-tongue) in home-based childcare services. (2023)
3. Early Learning Readiness Assessment for pre-schooling
4. Promoting Social and Emotional Learning at Early Childhood Level in schools
5. Empowering and enabling teachers to improve instructional practices through action research
6. Early diagnostics assessment in healthcare has been introduced by the Health Sector
 - Implementing the Denver Developmental Screening Test (DDST)
 - Introducing universal neonatal screening for Inborn Errors of Metabolism (IEMs)



Tashkent Declaration (v): Engage with the International community to harness scientific evidence and digital technologies to further transform curricula and pedagogy and to develop the skills children need in a rapidly changing and increasingly digitized world in the absence of adequate progress on sustainable

- 1.1. Renaissance Learning Online Library for children in the early childhood years (Primary 1 to Primary 6) Access over 5000 books and take assessment periodically.
2. Britannica Research Platform in the primary school
- Establish structures and procedures for data management in ECCE in the Health, Education, and Social Affairs



Tashkent Declaration (vi): Commitments to Public in Education, increase financing for ECCE to a level sufficient to achieve SDG Target 4.2, in particular working towards the allocation of at least 10 per cent of education expenditures to pre-primary education and prioritize and reorient public expenditures for ECCE to focus on the poorest and most disadvantaged.



1. Government Budget Allocation (including funding of sectoral projects in the National Action Plan) although the budget is not disaggregated for ECCE, direct funding of ministries and agencies
2. Financial Assistance for registered home-based childcare service providers (2020)
3. Financial Assistance for parents with children in Registered childcare services
4. Development and Launched of a Childcare Benefit Information System, Seychelles (CBISS)
5. National ECCE Trust Fund. This fund was created to promote and support national ECCE programs and ensure their sustainability.

Tashkent Declaration (vii): Integrate and Strengthen policies and strategies into whole of government, inter ministerial and multi-sectoral approaches to ECCE planning and budgeting covering all domains of quality ECCE provision, services and programmes.

- Adopt a multi-sectoral approach for ECCE which involves collaboration across sectors, namely Education, Health, Local Government and Community Affairs, Employment and Social Affairs, Youth, Sports and Family, and Finance, ensuring a holistic response in the provision of ECCE
- Establishment of Sectoral ECCE technical Committees and National Coordinating Committee (NCCOM)
- Formulating and coordinating two-year National Action Plans since 2013, in collaboration with all ECCE sectors, to accelerate the implementation of ECCE initiatives across the country. (Launched 6th edition in 2023)
- Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms to monitor strategic priorities and actions in ECCE



Challenges

- Long-term sustainable investments in ECCE in the context of growing competition amongst competing priorities nationally as a small country
- The quantity and quality of our workforce personnel -Recruitment, training and retaining qualified educators and staff members
- Informal home-based childminding services across the country
- Need for increased special needs programmes and interventions in early childhood
- Disaggregated funding for ECCE across sectors and agencies



Way Forward

- Sustain and reinforce collaborative National Action Planning
- Promote the use of the consultative research model for policy development to ensure evidence-based decision-making
- Engagement in global initiatives and leadership in ECCE as a UNESCO Category 2 Institute, leveraging its international status.
- Advocate for increased financial resources in ECCE
- Maintain and expand the financial assistance programme to enhance accessibility and affordability of quality early child care services.
- Establish an Early Childhood Management Information System (ECMIS)

Day 2 - Highlights of Presentation

Improvements and implementation of policy and legal frameworks

Reported progress has been made in the development of policies and legislation. Several countries have drafted their national pre-primary policy, ECCE Framework, ECCE policy, integrated early child development policy, ECCE strategy, national policy for children. Alongside national legislation has been enacted for quality assurance to review legal instruments related to ECCE and to regulate child care services. Also there has been legalization of pre-school by presidential decree for all sectors to work together in an articulated way.

Critical issues include updating, reviewing, and further work in the development of national policies.



Increase financing for ECCE

There has been limited progress in the financing of ECCE. Public-Private Partnership arrangements are on actionable agendas. Increase in government subsidies has been reported. For example, construction of ECCE hubs and satellite centres, introduction of Free Pre-Primary Education Scheme, school feeding schemes



Strengthen ECCE systems including the recruitment, qualifications and working conditions of all ECCE personnel

Schemes and plans to improve the conditions and qualification of teachers are being pursued. These need to be addressed and perhaps we can think about possible model that can be adopted or adapted to train early childhood teachers. There were concerns about the qualification of teachers, low level, not relevant, no experience. The feeling that there is a need for the professionalization of early childhood workers, create careers paths and upgrade qualification.



The development of skills and values for global citizenship

There has been limited reported progress in this area. However, specific community projects are being experimented with to seek to address this area, for example Project-Based Learning to outreach children's families and local community. Global support is being sought to address these issues.

Also, adoption of the STEM approach has been reported as a means of achieving sustainable development goals.



Quality learning for all children, including foundational literacy, numeracy and social-emotional skills

Several milestone projects have been reported to indicate progress in the pursuit of quality in early learning. Early Learning Programmes, Revision of Curriculum to focus on literacy numeracy and sociemotional learning, School Readiness Assessment are some of the initiatives reported. Revision of preprimary and teachers guidelines to reinforce learning through play.



Harness scientific evidence and digital technologies

Clear progress has been difficult to note. Use of digital technology has been initiated for example of interactive radio, with the intention of using tablets, satellite centres, kiosk platform, digital platform to showcase good practices and provide pedagogical resources and virtual training and tutorials. There has been a mention of developing a framework to use technology for children with special needs

Strengthening whole-of-government and multi-sectoral approach

Many countries are planning strategic actions linked to government engagement and multi-sectoral collaboration. Mauritius has an Authority spearheading ECCE action and linking with other organisations. High level inter-ministerial committee. Ensure whole of government multi-sectoral and integrated approach strengthening of collaboration

Improve monitoring and reporting capacity

Monitoring system evaluation has not been widely reported. Data systems are still being piloted such as the ECD EMIS piloted in districts WB support. Need strong monitoring mechanism and strengthen quality assurance. However, there has been good practices such as ECD census, public expenditure and institutional review

Day 2 in pictures





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The Institute for Early Childhood Development
1st Floor, Fairview House, Chemin Josephine Cafrine, Perseverance, Victoria, Seychelles
Tel: +248 4 286 565 www.iecd.gov.sc